

drugs while also reducing the number of outpatient visits that VA physicians must perform each year. VA facilities would then be able to devote more time and care to those veterans who require inpatient services.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation to give our nation's veterans prompt access to the prescription medications that they need and have earned.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ENHANCEMENT ACT

##### HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2003*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, ten years ago this month, President Clinton signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act (PL 103-3), legislation that allows employees to take time off from work to care for a new baby or sick family member. Because of this landmark legislation, more than 35 million Americans have been able to take unpaid leave without the risk of losing their jobs.

Today, I am introducing the Family and Medical Leave Enhancement Act. Building upon the success of the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), this legislation would allow more people to benefit from FMLA by allowing employees in companies with more than 25 employees to take Family and Medical Leave and would extend employee leave for workers to meet their family's needs. The legislation includes 24 hours of leave (during any 12-month period) for parents and grandparents to go to parent-teacher conferences or to take their children, grandchildren or other family members to the doctor for regular medical or dental appointments.

Currently, the FMLA allows qualified workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for newborns, seek emergency medical care for themselves, parents, children under 18 or a legal spouse. My legislation would add commonsense enhancements to FMLA.

In 1997, this legislative measure was supported by President Bill Clinton. In February 1997, President Clinton said, "I call upon Congress to expand the family leave law to give parents an additional 24 hours of unpaid leave each year to take a child or an elderly relative to a regular doctor's appointment or to attend parent-teacher conferences at school. In so doing, we'll make our families stronger and our workers more productive, building the kind of country and economy we all want for our children."

On behalf of America's families, I urge my fellow colleagues to join me in support of the Family and Medical Leave Enhancement Act.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE CÉSAR ESTRADA CHÁVEZ LANDS LEGACY STUDY ACT

##### HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2003*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I proudly introduce the César Estrada Chávez Land Legacy Study

Act. This bill will look for ways to honor César Estrada Chávez, founder of the United Farm Workers and passionate champion of human and civil rights.

Specifically, the bill directs the National Park Service to look for ways to recognize Chávez's contributions to our society through historical sites and park areas. It is the first step in honoring his tremendous accomplishments and the local communities where his footprints were made.

César Chávez was a humble man. Little did anyone know the greatness that he would bestow on future generations.

In his early childhood, César Chávez was raised as a farm worker in Yuma, Arizona. Raised during the Great Depression, his family lost everything and was forced to join the thousands of farm workers that wandered the Southwest to find work. During his youth, the Chávez family migrated throughout the Southwest, working in various farms that fed our country.

The young César Chávez experienced first hand the hardships and injustices of the thousand of farm workers at that time. His home was barely livable and his school hardly fit to be called schoolhouse.

Unfair labor practices—harassment, abuse, long hours, low pay, hazardous working conditions and limited education opportunities kept farm workers from being self-sufficient and empowered citizens.

Witnessing and experiencing this lifestyle, César Chávez sought to make changes in the way farm workers were treated.

He united many others who also suffered similar atrocities with those who empathized with the struggle to become part of the union movement. In 1952, he left the fields and joined the Community Service Organization. There he conducted voter registration drives and campaigns against racial and economic discrimination.

In 1962, he took his vast experience, his compassion, and his brothers and sisters in this multi-ethnic struggle and started the National Farmworkers Association—today's United Farmworkers of America.

The UFW succeeded in organizing the oppressed. They overcame this oppression through boycotts and pickets, and when all else failed, hunger strikes.

Chávez was a student of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent philosophies. He knew that you cannot unite people through violent means, but you can connect them by joining hands in peaceful demonstration.

Since its inception, the UFW has achieved incredible results through its organization. Fair wages, health care coverage, pension benefits, housing, pesticide regulations, and countless other rights and protections are more a reality because of the UFW and in turn because of its founder—César E. Chávez.

In the past, we have honored other heroes, like Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement, through national parks and land. The life of César Chávez and his family provides an outstanding opportunity to demonstrate and interpret the history of agricultural labor in the west through the National Parks Service.

#### RECOGNITION OF SABRINA WELLS

##### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2003*

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Sabrina Wells, a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, Troop 300, and in earning the most prestigious honor of the Gold Award.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement attainable in Girl Scouting. To earn the gold award, a scout must complete five requirements, all of which promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values, and leadership skills. The requirements include: 1. Earning four interest project patches, each of which requires seven activities that center on skill building, technology, service projects, and career exploration; 2. Earning the Career Exploration Pin, which involves researching careers, writing resumes, and planning a career fair or trip; 3. Earning the Senior Girl Scout Leadership Award, which requires a minimum of 30 hours of work using leadership skills; 4. Designing a self-development plan that requires assessment of ability to interact with others and prioritize values, participation for a minimum of 15 hours in a community service project, and development of a plan to promote Girl Scouting; and 5. Spending a minimum of 50 hours planning and implementing a Girl Scout Gold Award project that has a positive lasting impact on the community.

For her Gold Award project, Sabrina organized a golf clinic for middle and high school girls.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Sabrina Wells for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of the Gold Award.

#### TRIBUTE TO SHIRLEY HALL NICHOLS

##### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2003*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in commemoration of Black History Month, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the many accomplishments of distinguished African-Americans in Mississippi's Second Congressional District.

Today I rise to pay tribute to Shirley Hall Nichols. Mrs. Nichols is a native of Leake County in Mississippi. After earning a bachelor's degree from Alcorn State University in 1979, she began working as a paraprofessional at Carthage Elementary School. Later that year she began teaching secondary math at Velma Jackson High School.

In 1997, Mrs. Nichols was given the opportunity to earn a masters degree from Mississippi State University. Mrs. Nichols earned her masters in School Administration in 1999, where she went on to serve as principal of Amanda Elzy Elementary School and later East Elementary/Middle School.